

21 February 1952

COMMENTS ON THE MEMORANDUM ENCLOSED WITH THE LETTER FROM DATED
January 25th, 1952.

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General Comments:

Source's analysis of the world situation appears to be sound in most respects, although it concerns situations which have been fully publicized in the press. Source gives the impression of being a reasonably well-informed and competent observer. His information concerning Eastern Europe is much more accurate than that on the USSR, but there is very little new intelligence contained in the memorandum. On the other hand, it does not appear possible that the source could have obtained all his information on this area solely from overt material.

Specific Comments:

Source presents his most detailed information on Order of Battle of the Soviet-Satellite forces in Europe. His figures on the strength of these forces in Germany, Austria and Eastern Europe are fairly accurate when compared with current ID estimates.

There are some errors which may in part involve a confusion of terms. For example, the Soviet Northern Group of Forces is not located in East Germany as the source says, but is actually situated in Poland where, according to the source, there are no Soviet forces. Moreover, he credits the Northern Group of Forces with 30 to 31 divisions when in fact it has only three divisions. The Soviet occupation forces in East Germany, however, comprise about 22 line divisions with 10 other supporting divisions, or a total of 32 divisions.

The three Soviet divisions in Poland are located in former German territory, which may account for the source's statement that there are no Soviet forces in Poland proper. Observations by Western representatives in Poland do not bear out his information that large Soviet military supply depots and tank parks are located along the two major rail lines through Poland leading to the West.

Source also tends to accept concentrations of military forces which would be logical in the event of a Communist intention to initiate hostile action in Europe but are not in agreement with current US intelligence. He asserts, for example, that the "main body" of the Polish Army is situated in the Goerlitz-Liegnitz area near the Polish-Czech border, when it is known in fact that the Polish Army is evenly disposed throughout the country. He further asserts that 70 divisions of the Soviet Army are concentrated in the former Polish territory annexed by the USSR. Present

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evidence does not support this information. Source sets the strength of Soviet forces in the Baltic area at about 40 divisions -- ID estimates the same forces as now comprising roughly 14 divisions.

While much of the information concerning the Polish Army is known to be correct, the statement that its size was to be increased to 630,000 by the autumn of 1951 is not in accord with current intelligence information, nor is there any evidence to show that one of Rokossovsky's main tasks is to create a Polish Army of 1,000,000 men, as the source states. Information contained in this report concerning the Polish navy and air force is correct in most particulars. His general remarks on the other Satellite armies are also accurate.

Source indulges in much speculation concerning a possible attack on Yugoslavia. He asserts that he personally is not convinced that the West would permit itself to become involved in a world war because of Yugoslavia. He then makes the claim that according to "information from Karlsborst and other high Russian commands" the Russians do not believe that the West would enter into a world war on Yugoslavia's account. There is no such definite information concerning Russian estimates of the West's attitude toward an attack on Yugoslavia. The cautious policy that the USSR has pursued so far, however, does not suggest that the Russians are convinced that the West would remain indifferent to such an attack. Source also asserts without any supporting evidence that a "Cominform Yugoslav civil-war army" is now being organized in Russia. There is no evidence available here that such is the case and it is considered highly unlikely.

Source's statements concerning the Soviet Army refer to matters which have been frequently discussed in press analyses on the same subject, and are in accord with the views of many observers. His discussion of Soviet Army organization and tactics constitutes a reasonable analysis. However, it is based largely on German experience in World War II.

He also expresses the view that there will be no world war in 1952, but that other Korea-type situations can be expected to develop during the year. This is solely an expression of opinion by the source. Present intelligence estimates consider an initiation of global hostilities by the USSR in 1952 unlikely; while another Korea-type situation might occur in any of several places this year, there is no reliable evidence of it as yet.

There are other inaccuracies in this memorandum, although, with the exception of the errors noted above, source's general conclusions have considerable validity.

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